

VZCZCXYZ0018  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #1393 2670945  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 230945Z SEP 08  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9993  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8609  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0059

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 001393

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - NIDA EMMONS  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S. FINANCIAL CRISIS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies continued to focus their coverage September 23 on the growing fears around the island about the safety of Chinese dairy products; on the probe into former President Chen Shui-bian's alleged money-laundering cases; and on Taiwan's sluggish economic situation. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" discussed the U.S. government's biggest-ever rescue plan to tackle its financial crisis. The article described it as huge extortion by Wall Street on the U.S. government and a major kidnapping move of the U.S. government against the U.S. people and the world. End summary.

"Wall Street's Big Extortion"

Associate Professor Tao Yi-feng of National Taiwan University's Department of Political Science noted in an op-ed in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 520,000]:

"... It is inconceivable that this largest government rescue in human history has happened in the United States, which strongly believes that 'a person must take full responsibility for his own misfortune.' What is even more ironic is that those who fail to take responsibility for the consequences [of the financial crisis] this time are none other than Wall Street, which has full conviction in the strong men's philosophy of laissez-faire. ... The US\$700 billion worth of debt is tantamount to the total expense of the United States for its war in Iraq; it is also akin to every U.S. citizen having to shoulder US\$2,000 worth of debt for cleaning up the mess of Wall Street that has gone too far in its money game.  
...

"... For Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson Jr., this will be a battle that allows only success. ... Should it fail, even such a big move will be unable to rescue [the U.S.], and what [the United States] will confront will not simply be a deeper collapse of the people's faith in financial markets, but also an overall breakdown of people's confidence in the U.S. government. Should that happen, it will result in global investors' panic dumping of U.S. government bonds and U.S. dollars, and the world economy will fall into a long period of panic and depression. Such a rescue plan of the century can be regarded as a huge extortion by Wall Street on the U.S. government and a large kidnapping move by the U.S. government against the American people and the world. But we all have to pray that it will succeed."

YOUNG